

Tips to Help Property Managers Effectively Manage Meetings

Article By:

Commercial Real Estate

Property managers are often tasked with leading a board or member meeting. These tips will help to keep the meeting on track and productive. Before doing anything else in preparation for the meeting — double check compliance with notice requirements. No notice = no meeting.

Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance – “The Five ‘P’s”

Preparation is the key to a successful meeting. Determine what type of meeting will be held – that is, a board or member meeting. Create a clear and concise agenda. Remind the board that it is your role to keep the meeting on track. Organization helps to start things off right and keep the meeting on the right track.

Know your audience. Prepare your board for known issues and discuss the association’s response. Remind the board of actions you will take in the meeting and how they should respond.

Pay Close Attention to the Minutes

Decide who will take the minutes at the meeting. Clarify what the minutes should contain, including important details. Delineate action items.

Sloppy or incomplete minutes can hurt the association’s interests if questions arise as to what was supposed to be discussed, what actually was discussed, and what conclusions and decisions were reached. Minutes also record compliance with procedure.

Follow Proper Procedure

Provide copies of the agenda to all in attendance. Open the meeting with an overview of what will be addressed. Let attendees know what you will discuss and, if appropriate, tell them what will not be discussed.

Remind attendees of the meeting rules. (The association should have a Conduct Resolution and Code of Conduct for Meetings – if it doesn’t, talk to the board about implementing one.) Stick to procedure, i.e. motion, second, all in favor.

Follow a set meeting schedule. Handle old business first. Handle new business. Ratify contracts. Approve minutes. Stay on track.

The Property Manager's Role in Meetings

The purpose of a Board meeting is for the Board to conduct its business. The property manager's role in Board meetings is to provide guidance and leadership. That involves more than making a list of items to discuss.

If someone is veering off track and derailing the meeting, the property manager must tactfully steer a discussion back on point. Don't allow one person to dominate the conversation about any item that is being discussed.

Limit community participation at board meetings to the time slot designated for such participation. Limit question/answers to one or two inquiries per person.

Keep the meeting flowing on schedule.

If the Meeting Goes Off Track

Make that clear with your body language and demeanor that you are running the meeting. Remind everyone of the meeting rules and stress that there will be consequences if they are not followed such as fines, ejection, or stopping the meeting.

Deal with adversity when it arises. Jump in the conversation when things first start to get out of control. Get everyone's attention and channel them back to the topic at hand.

If a pointless debate begins, tell the parties involved to deal with it later, outside of the meeting – then move on. If a unit owner raises off topic issues relating to his or her own personal agenda, tell them to see you during office hours, send an email, or call you the next day. Homeowners who wish to grandstand or make statements can do that after the meeting is closed.

In extreme cases involving contentious issues, have security onsite – or call the police if necessary.

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